

19 DEC 1978

OLC 78-3625

*See misc*

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Federal Women's Program Board  
[redacted] Chairperson

SUBJECT : Security Inspection Program (U)

STATINTL

1. Action Requested: That the Security Inspection Program be modified to eliminate its unfair application to women. (U)

2. Background: Since October 1978, Agency employees have been participating in an experimental 24 hours-a-day briefcase, purse, and package inspection program. The Federal Women's Board has received a number of complaints which the Board feels are serious enough to warrant your attention. The Board members spoke to Mr. Bob Gambino, Director of Security, on 14 November 1978, and he seemed surprised at the depth of negative feeling about the search expressed by the Board members. While we understand the rationale for searching only items that are carried, in practice the system is unfair to women who consistently carry one or more items. This inherent unfairness is evidenced by the lines of women waiting to be searched at each building exit at COB daily while the majority of men depart without questioning. Mr. Gambino promised to look into the uneven application of the search. (U/IUO)

3. We would like to emphasize that we support the need for the program, but we also recognize that its success depends largely upon the cooperation of Agency employees. (U/IUO)

4. We feel that as representatives of the women of CIA, we have a responsibility to bring to your attention matters that are of importance and concern to some of the women employees. According to the complaints received by Board members, many women feel that the inspection program is fundamentally unfair. They contend that their purses are not merely containers but private and personal items of clothing that all women must have for their money, keys, etc. Because women view their purses as extensions of their persons, they consider the purse search a grave--and sometimes embarrassing--invasion of their privacy, in much the same way a man would view a search of his coat and pants pockets. (U/IUO)

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5. A number of the women feel strongly that if the purse inspections are to continue, then men's inner coat pockets should also be subjected to a visual inspection. If the inspection program is a serious one, it should be clear that a man's inner coat pockets serve the same function as a woman's purse and can conceal documents. The recent revelation in the press that Kampiles smuggled out highly sensitive documents in his inner coat pockets should demand that the men's pockets be inspected. To our knowledge, there is no case of a woman employee concealing documents in her purse. (U/IUO)

6. Because of the interest and emotion generated by this problem, the Board fears that if some corrective action is not considered, there is the very real possibility that a disgruntled and aggrieved woman employee will 1) go to the press; 2) file an EEO complaint; or 3) file a lawsuit, claiming a violation of EEO laws or Constitutional rights. (U/IUO)

7. Recommendation:

(a) That the Security Inspection Program be modeled on the National Security Agency's inspection program in which only briefcases and packages are inspected. (U/IUO)

(b) That alternatively, if the inspection of women's purses is to continue, then there should be an inspection of men's inner coat pockets. (U/IUO)

(c) That because of the inconsistent administration of the inspection program by the FPO's, the FPO guidelines describing the scope of the searches under the program be distributed to every employee and posted at each entrance. (U/IUO)

(d) That employees be instructed that any alleged infractions of the guidelines are to be reported to the Director of Security. (U/IUO)

STATINTL

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[Redacted Signature]  
for the Federal Women's  
Program Board

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Central Intelligence

DISAPPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Central Intelligence

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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